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INFO RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY 0545  
RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON PRIORITY 0169  
RUEHGP/AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE PRIORITY 1912  
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DEPT FOR IO, NEA, AND PRM; USAID FOR DCHA; GENEVA FOR  
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [PHUM](#) [BM](#)  
SUBJECT: BURMA: A/SYG WAHLSTROM ON HER PROPOSED VISIT

REF: STATE 131137

11. (SBU) Summary. Following reftel request, on September 28 USUN ECOSOC Minister Counselor met with Assistant Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Margareta Wahlstrom to discuss her proposed trip to Burma. Wahlstrom's travel plans for mid-October include field trips to drought-affected areas, the Thai border region, and the western zone. Despite current violence in Burma, Wahlstrom still hopes to travel and she has received no indication that the standing invitation of the Burmese government has been rescinded. USUN expressed objection to Wahlstrom's meeting with the head of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) and requested that she raise the issues outlined by the June 2007 International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) statement in meetings with government officials. USUN also requested that Wahlstrom report back following her mission, particularly on any progress in addressing the range of humanitarian concerns raised by ICRC. End summary.

12. (SBU) Wahlstrom reported that her proposed trip to Burma, a follow-up to an April 2007 mission when she visited Rangoon and the new capital, is currently planned for mid-October and should include field travel to drought-affected areas, the Thai border region (specifically to enhance efforts at linking humanitarian information from within the country to information from the Thai Burmese Border Consortium), and the western zone/Rohingya area. Wahlstrom noted that this agenda was developed at the suggestion of Burmese government officials during her April visit and in consultation with the UN Country Team. On the timing of the trip, Wahlstrom stressed that her schedule was always planned to follow the visit of Special Envoy Gambari. (Wahlstrom noted that Gambari will now arrive in Burma on Saturday, September 29). Asked how the current events in Burma might impact the timing of her visit, Wahlstrom replied that she has not received any indication from the Burmese that her invitation has been rescinded, but that she will be back in contact with the Burmese Ambassador in New York next week when UN General Assembly (UNGA) activity has slowed. Wahlstrom stressed that if the Burmese government does not allow her to travel to the field she will postpone her trip until she is able to travel outside Rangoon. (Note: A vacancy announcement has been issued for Wahlstrom's post and she is expected to leave office at the end of October. End note.)

13. (SBU) USUN emphasized that, particularly under the

current circumstances, it would be inappropriate for Wahlstrom to meet with the head of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA). Wahlstrom did not directly answer, but noted the concern.

¶4. (SBU) USUN also requested that in meetings with government officials Wahlstrom press the issues outlined by the ICRC statement of late June 2007, particularly concerning restricted access and forced labor. USUN requested that Wahlstrom report back on any progress by the government on these issues. Wahlstrom noted that access had been a major focus of her first round of meetings in April and that it remains high on her agenda for the coming visit. She stated that she was in close contact with ICRC and confirmed that there are many issues of common concern, but she also noted ICRC's sensitivity regarding representation from outside the Red Cross. Wahlstrom pointed out that her trip itself, particularly the field visits, will provide a test of access.

¶5. (SBU) Wahlstrom estimated that her mission will require at least a week. She will meet with Gambari when he returns to New York (which she speculated could be as early as October 1 or 2) and she will also consult with the diplomatic community in Bangkok while she is in the region.

¶6. (SBU) USUN highlighted President Bush's announcement of increased humanitarian assistance for Burma in his recent address to UNGA. USUN also emphasized that Wahlstrom's trip must send the right message during this critical time. Wahlstrom wholeheartedly agreed.  
KHALILZAD